

FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL

April 26, 2002
Family Outreach
1212 Helena Avenue
Helena, MT

Members Present: Kelly Johnson (chair), Brian Lenhardt, Sandy McGennis, Dan McCarthy, Liz Harter, Sandi Marisdotter, Denise King, Barb Stefanic, Lucy Hart-Paulson, Ted Maloney, Gwen Beyer, Phyllis Astheimer, Sharon Wagner, Gerald & Maria Pease, Novalene Martin, Patti Russ

Members Absent: Rene Lenhardt, Sue Forest, Jackie Jandt, Ann Marie Johnson, John Holbrook, Sylvia Danforth, Dr. Mary Anne Guggenheim, Millie Kindle, Cris Volinkaty, Lynda Korth, Shelley & Jay Korth,

Others Present: Richard Van Haecke, Part C Coordinator/DDP Child & Family Services Specialist; Jackie Emerson, DDP Administrative Support

Welcome & Introductions: Kelly welcomed everyone. Richard Van Haecke introduced himself as the new Part C Coordinator replacing Vicki LaFond-Smith. The others present introduced themselves.

The agenda was reviewed and the order changed due to the fact that Gwen Beyer needed to leave early.

Old Business:

November 6, 2001 Minutes:

Ted asked for an overview of the minutes from November 6, 2001. The resolution of the issue of opening Part C and FE&S was that DDP would make no changes at this time. The letter of response will be copied and sent out with the minutes.

November 16, 2001 Minutes:

The Korths, Lenhardts, and Novlene were approved for the Council. Mike Cooney needs to be contacted to make sure that he desired to be on the council. (Ernie Saxman, his predecessor on Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies, had agreed to be on the council.)

PLUK/DDP confidentiality issue:

The Department is still researching whether it should happen in the future. Cary Lund has not had time to fully review the issue and make a decision.

Portability Issue:

A letter sent as a recommendation to DDP. Copies were handed out.

Wage & Hour Issue:

CDC is recommending families pay minimum wage to respite providers. Family Outreach has made respite providers employees. The result has been a slight reduction of services as a result of the cost of worker comp benefits.

Transition training:

No one knew of any that had been scheduled. There had been some meetings with STEP.

Mentors:

Kelly is mentoring the Jay & Shelley Korth, Millie Kindle is mentoring the Brian & Rene Lenhardt and Liz Harter is mentoring Novelene Martin.

When Mike Cooney is contacted, and if he is willing to serve on the council, he will need to be assigned a mentor.

Part C Annual Performance Report:

The report has been completed and submitted. Copies were distributed.

Orientation Binders:

The binders need to be reviewed and revised.

Motion was made to accept the minutes from the November 16th meeting. Gwen Beyer made the motion, Lucy Hart-Paulson seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Website update:

The website needs to be updated – it would be a good place to post the minutes and the dates for meetings. Jay and Shelley Korth were named the FSSAC liaison between the council and the Department. Kelly will work with the Jay and Shelley to arrange a meeting with Heather Lambert, the DDP website coordinator.

AWARE application to provide all Child and Family Services:

A review and recommendations to Jeff Sturm were made. Ted would like to know what the process will be and have some input before changes are made.

Ted made a motion that another letter be sent and that the subcommittee (Kelly, Ted, and Mary Anne) meet with Jeff and Joe Mathews. The motion was seconded by Sandi Marisdotter and it passed unanimously.

State Plan reauthorization:

There are no significant changes for the current 2002 application. Gail Gray's letter refers to the next year's application. The date is usually in May but not always the 31st.

PLUK participation:

Although not members, an effort needs to be made to make sure PLUK is invited and encouraged to attend FSSAC meetings.

*Sharon commented that PLUK represents Family Voices which has a great website with a wealth of family information.

Budget Cuts:

It looks like there will probably be a minimum 3% cut in the Department budget. The cuts will be across the board and each division will have to propose potential areas to be cut.

Scenarios for possible 10% cuts also have to be submitted.

Possible DDP personnel changes:

Richard stated that he would have the option to stay in Child and Family Services or go back to Quality Assurance as of July 1.

Child and Family Provider meetings:

There will be separate meetings for the MAIDS subcommittee of Child and Family providers and the DDP quarterly statewide meeting for Child and Family providers.

Reauthorization of IDEA:

Ted suggested writing a letter emphasizing the need for funding increases in order to adequately supply services, especially to rural families. There needs to be more flex at the state level in how to get things done.

There is a time delay between the reauthorization and the changes that are to take place. Possible changes that may take place are in the areas of HeadStart and Part C. Major changes are probably 5 years away. Patti commented that there will be development of early learning standards for states with no preK.

Wage & Hour:

Cris V. is researching the companionship law and may suggest having two types – one for more occasional workers that could be proposed as an exception to the 40 hr/week respite worker.

The transportation issue is similar in that parents reimburse for transportation. Wage & Hour laws say that you can't just reimburse for mileage.

Cris will update the council at the next meeting.

Public Awareness Committee:

Kelly and Ernie were supposed to work on brochures but Ernie changed positions.

Ted stated that the issue needs to be addressed as there are funds that need to be allocated from the Child Find grant. He will meet with Richard.

Sandi commented that in Madison County there were 4 new referrals from areas not heard from before.

Part C Representation on State Special Education Advisory Panel:

Gwen is the representative that serves as a bridge between FSSAC and the Special Education Advisory Council. She reported on training opportunities and Project Vision.

Cost Allocation:

Richard is working with the Department of Education in their concern that Part C funds not be inappropriately used.

Council Member Roles & Responsibilities:

Kelly will work on several roles that need to be updated and will have it done by the next meeting.

New Business:

Mentors:

Mike Cooney will be contacted to see if he wants to serve on the Council and if he wants a mentor.

Part C Annual Performance Report:

Has been discussed and full reports have been distributed.

Part C Child Count:

The count total is 600, down from 660 last year. The cumulative total is also down.

Hearing Screening:

Ted stated that he was contacted by Steve Gettle who is interested in the issue of New Born Screening: the link between screening and what happens afterward, which services, follow through, tracking and registry, and training an FSS for screening.

There needs to be some time spent connecting the issues and getting out information. A meeting will be scheduled with Richard, Bob Runkel, Steve Gettle, and Marilyn Pearson to work on identifying kids as early as possible, coordination and follow-up, and need for training.

A stakeholders' meeting may be scheduled at the end of June.

Application to become a Qualified Provider:

AWARE has gone through the application process. They are in compliance with regulations and have currently been certified to provide IFE&S in Regions 4&5 – with the understanding that if and when Part C and FE&S are opened up they will be automatically qualified in those additional areas.

REM and Reach have asked for the materials.

FSS certification process:

Several appeals have been received about decisions concerning certification that need to be addressed. The process needs to be reviewed. The MAIDS Child and Family subcommittee will be looking at the process and making recommendations.

Ted commented that the competencies on the applications do not always deal with Part C and that people sometimes have caseloads that do not deal with ages 0-2 but are asking to be certified.

Richard informed the Council that there will not be any changes made before the next meeting and that he will then share the recommendations from the MAIDS subcommittee.

Parent Reports:

Kelly reported that she had been getting good feedback from parents. There were no other parent reports.

Agency Reports:

Ted :

- Child Find grant handout
- Sara Mulligan has a new position as an executive with the Council on Exceptional Children, Part H, Early Intervention component

Barb:

- Improving Child Find
- There may possibly be a HeadStart in the Laurel area in another year.

Gerald: (Legislative)

- No Special Session will make for a tough session in January.

Denise: (Medicaid)

- Medicaid has done one round of cuts and the 2nd round will be July 1.
- 2% cut in provider fees but was able to exclude private nursing.
- May cut optional services for adults and may potentially cut access.
- Some providers no longer want to be Medicaid providers.
- Well Child Screens have increased from 61% to 67 % children receiving.
- Immunizations are at 82% for Medicaid kids – probably higher but data is not complete

Patti: (Childcare)

- Working on implementation of subsidized care for the disabled.
- Working with FSS to develop IP's.
- Karen Martin, Childcare and Early Intervention Coordinator with Childcare Plus, is trying to get specialized services for children.
- FMAP matching funds are in jeopardy due to budget cuts.
- TANF caseloads are rising.

Dan: (OPI)

- Bob Runkel testified in front of the US Senate committee considering the re-authorization of IDEA.
- Montana CEC met last week. OPI staff presented information on a variety of topics. There was a good turn out.
- OPI website: www.opi.state.mt.us has tons of stuff including statewide testing results by county and special education material: We Teach All brochure, Montana Transition Services, Montana State Improvement Grant, and Transition Requirements

- There is an inquiry involving a Child and Family provider placing a child in another community. It deals with choice and the implications in public schools.

Sandy: (Montana School for the Deaf and Blind)

- Strategic plan includes proposals for expanded outreach and funds for professional development.
- Handed out a brochure for Western Regional Early Intervention Conference that will be in Jackson Hole on June 14 & 15.
- Families Learning with Families will have their 6th Annual Learning Weekend on June 7, 8, & 9 at the School.
- Handed out a brochure from the S.E.E. Center – outlining skillshops that teach Signing in Exact English

Sharon: (Children's Special Health Services Section)

- The Bureau is now the Health Resources and Services Bureau and is in with CHIP
- Sharon is now the program coordinator of Children with Special Needs.
- The bureau has a great data information program ready to be shown that demonstrates birth outcomes monitoring.

Meeting schedule:

According to bylaws, there needs to be 2 more business meetings and the Summit this year – a total of 4 per year.

The June meeting needs to be rescheduled since the March meeting was delayed.

The remaining meetings for the year are:

June 21

August 8 & 9 – Annual Fall Summit

(Dan made the motion to have the Fall Summit on August 8 & 9 at the Wingate Inn in Helena. Liz Harter seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.)

November 15 – Election meeting and Business meeting.

Meeting adjourned.